Xerogenia

Duplicate all material except

General Dupl

STATEMENT OF MR. J. G. SHARP, TERRA COTTA, ONTARIO.

NOV. 16th, 1931.

Cast four lines on p. 5c used in Rivers and Deb to Conf.

Dupl

Belfour Dupl

The material at my command refers to the South corner of Caledon Township only.

The history of this vicinity, familiarly known as Rockside, (no doubt named from the amount of rock in evidence), may be said to have commenced in the Spring of 1820, when one, John McDonald of the Parish of Lochwinnock, Scotland, his wife, Margaret Gibson and a large grown up family, together with numerous relatives and others, arrived after an arduous tramp through the woods from the village of York. I have been told that the party on leaving Scotland numbered some seventy souls but after the six weeks ocean voyage and a further two weeks up the St. Lawrence in what was known as Durham boats, a number left the party at Brockville and located in the Township of Crosby. A further deflection took place at Kingston, and the remainder in due course arrived at York. The Crown Lands Agent there seeing an excellent chance of shoving the frontier of settlement yet farther back, suggested Caledon as a good location in asmuch as the party desired to locate together, so early in the season the immigrants found themselves at their land of promise. What their thoughts were on arriving in such a succession of rock, hill and swamp, we can only imagine. No doubt they were various according to the

individual. However there was no turning back and John McDonald Sr. who might have been called the Patriarch, selected as his home Lot, 1, in the 6th concession W. now occupied by G. S. Kirkwood and John Smith, while the rest of the party took up locations in the near vicinity. In the absence of a complete list of these first arrivals it is impossible to give a full account of their locations at this date. Suffice it to say that then or within a few years at most there appear in addition to the clan McDonald, such names as Gibson, Kirkwood, McLaren, Crichton, Patullo, McLachlan, McArthur, McDougall, Smith, Brown, Sinclair, et al, and later Hutner, Walker, Frank, Rowan, Young, McNaughton, McLean, Campbell, McEachern. Some of these were U. E. Loyalist stock and were a very valuable acquisition to the neighborhood in being experienced woodsmen. They taught the rest how to hunt deer and bear and to dress and tan their skins. How to dry meat and fish, the latter being at that time very plentiful, especially speckled trout, and even salmon were said to come up the Credit as far as Salmonville(now Terra Cotta)

Pioneer life

The women also instructed their immigrant sisters in making bread by hop or salt rising, how to make soft soap and of course the exact phase of the moon in which to plant peas, beans, corn and such like so as to produce the best results.

At first all supplies had to be brought in from York, Dundas or Ancaster all of them more than forty miles distant and even the women took part in these arduous journeys, carrying their butter, or maple sugar, as the case may be, etc., on their back, and returning with necessities of at least equal weight.

Apropos of this I may say that a lady recently told me of her grandmother carrying a logging chain as her return cargo, the full forty miles from York. Surely these women were fit to rank with Parkman's "lioness-like mothers"of the West.

Pioneer Life

The first working oxen were brought into the settlement by Michael Bake - a mighty Nimrod, by the way - who left a record of thirteen bear killed in one autumn.

Wolves were also plentiful and a bounty was given for killing them as early as 1833, but it was not till this bounty was given to the Indians, also, that they were finally exterminated.

Two of our "oldest inhabitants" can still remember the Red-men as they made their periodical visits to the settlement, always being on the best of terms with the pioneers.

The first grist mill "above the mountain" was

erected at what is now the village of Belfountain, by the Franks and was afterwards operated by a Mr. McCurdy, a name still perpetuated in McCurdy street, in said village.

Belfountain was originally named "Tubtown" from an octagonal building erected by Archibald McNaughton, and there are yet old-timers who affectionately prefer the latter name.

Religion

At first the settlers held religious services in some central home, when a sermon would be read, and other exercises engaged in. Afterwards an itinerant preacher would give a service once a month, often walking the entire distance from Toronto township or elsewhere to do so. Then in 1831 a presbyterian congregation was organized, the service being held in the school house, and the minister - the Rev. Duncan McMillan - who also preached at Caledon East, a congregation ebing established there in the same year. In 1837 the present church building was erected, and the same has been in continuous use ever since, being newly decorated only last year. It stands on Lot 3, on the 4th Line West, and is widely known as the "Old White Church".

Surrounding it the cemetery contains the dust of many of the original settlers, and it is still visited by their descendants who reverence it as Holy Ground.

The school house before mentioned, did duty until 1846 when a new one was erected on the 5th Line, Lot 3. Up to this date it was customary for each scholar to bring a bunch of quills for the teacher to make into pens. The first teacher was Gilbert Rowan, Mrs. Rowan, his wife, had taken a course of training in nursing, etc., in the old land, and was consequently in demand over a wide area. The only person with medical training was an Angel of Mercy to many a poor settler.

Education

The year 1857 is remembered as the year of "The Rebellion". In this part of Caledon the great majority sympathized with the McKenzie movement, although few actually engaged in the act of rebellion. But when the Sedentary Militia was called out most of them failed to respond. Such however as did assemble at the point of rendezvous were finally peacefully sent home, their services not being required.

Militia

Up to the building of the Grand Trunk Railway most of the grain from this locality had to be teamed to Port Credit, Bronte, or Oakville. And as there was an hotel about every five lots, it is marvellous, considering the customs of the times, that/any actual cash ever got home for the wife and bairns at all. However, eventually temperance sentiment crystallized into the establishing of a Sons of Temperance Lodge at Rockside which up to some fifty years since was one of the social events of the week.

Temperance

The first Township Meeting held in Caledon was in January, 1825, at the house of Mathew Crooks, Lot 14, 4th Con. West. Whereat a constable - Thos. Bell,- was appointed with Stephen Wilcox, Assessor for the West side and Elisha Sarbox for the East, also John Crichton collector of Taxes.

Law

The first death at or near the settlement occurred in 1823, when a Welchman, David Williams, of Chinguacousy was killed by a falling tree and was enshrouded in the back of same tree and buried in what is now known as Boston Cemetery.

Pioneer Life

The first burial in the White Church Cemetery was one, Wm. Campbell, There are those yet living who can remember seeing a corpse carried through the woods on poles, for interment.

In the autumn of 1822, the first marriage was celebrated in the persons of John Crichton and Margaret Kirkwood, eldest daughter of Tom. Kirkwood, and sister of the late David Kirkwood of Brampton. They were married by Mr. Crooks, J.P., of Ancaster who was brought all that way for the purpose, being a personal friend of the groom.

In 1835 a post office was established in the township with George Bell as P. M. (where)

Post Office

It is said that at this date the population of the

township was about 1,500.

(I have been unable to find out where this post office was located.)

Now Mr. Bull I do not know to what extent you will be able to use the material I have sent you, however, much or little, as far as I am concerned it will be alright.

You are no doubt aware that the late Mrs. Shragg and others wrote during recent years, in both the BANNER and CONSERVATOR much of the history of Caledon Township and I think if you have access to their fyles you would get much help in your work. As I said at the beginning my knowledge is very local and I know nothing whatever of the settlement of the east side of our township. Also as regards the list of questions you sent me I have had to leave much of it blank, not being in possession of the required dates, etc.

Also I would refer you to "The Caledon Record", an old account of all the early municipal doings of the township. We had it in our possession at one time years ago, but it was returned to the County Clerk, Mr. David Kirkwood, then in office and I have no doubt it is there in the clerk's office at Brampton.

There were plenty of accounts in L.s.d., the wolf law, and other interesting data which I would think would be interesting, and a great assistance to you.

STREETSVILLE - REVIEW

FEB - 23/33.

General

TERRA COTTA

What might have been a very sad drowning accident took place here on Friday afternoon while the river Credit was at its high rampage. A lot of drift wood came down and Mr. Harold Hancock, while in the act of fishing some out while on the abutment of the town line bridge, overbalanced and fell in. And, as he unfortunately was alone at the time as he relates his narrow escape, he was drawn into the swift current, went through under the bridge, and was carried down near Townsend's dam, but fortunately he managed to keep afloat almost exhausted at times. He happened to be carried toward the shore near the old race, where he managed to crawl out. We are pleased to learn he is now able to be about again. It was a miracle he was not drowned. Motto: When danger is near keep out the way.

The Rev. Mr. Wilson preached an excellent sermon in the United church on Sunday. There was a fair turnout.

Mr. Jno. Stokes, of Claireville, was a caller in our hamlet last week.

The Terra Cotta orchestra are sure coming to the front now and have a number of engagements to to fill this winter. Anyone requiring a dance orchestra should give the boys a call. Prices reasonable. We wish them every success.

Master George Blythe, of the 9th line, Glenwilliams, was a caller in our hamlet last week.

It is rumored that the Halton Brick Company will resume operations early this spring.

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter spent a few days with Mr. and Mrs. C. McKeown at Acton.—Observer.

Brampton

Fire / Castle

"The Conservator" April 25, 1902.

A BAD FIRE

"The Castle" The property of Mr. George Williams, Wrecked Last Night - Furniture Saved - Cause Unknown - Insurance $3000.

Perhaps the most serious fire which has visited Brampton for some time occurred last night. About 6.45 smoke was seen issuing from the roof of the building known as the "Castle" on Church St., and almost before the alarm could be given it was all in flames. Being a wooden roof it quickly spread and made a big blaze. The firemen were quickly on the scene and worked bravely and well for over an hour, their efforts being finally crowned with success, but not before the entire upper portion of the building was destroyed. Fortunately willing hands had quickly removed the furniture, and of this it is thought little was destroyed. What started the fire seems to be a mystery, but the circumstances would indicate that a defective chimney was the cause.

The building is one of historic interest and importance. For years it was occupied by Squire Forster. After that gentleman's decease it was purchased by Mr. Geo. Williams, of the Williams Show Co., and has since been occupied on one side by himself and family, and on the other by his mother and sisters. Since purchasing the place Mr. Williams has effected very many improvements, and to the stately grandeur of the building has given the touch of modern conveniences and made it a very handsome and comfortable residence. He, therefore, has the sympathy of all in his misfortune. We understand that he had $3000 insurance on the building, which would go a long way toward repairing.

"The Conservator" April 8, 1920.

Terra Cotta

It is rumored that we are to have a billiard room in Terra Cotta this summer. ~~We are~~ "The Conservator's correspondent was sorry to say this unnecessary evil will not do much to promote the improvement of our village morally," & thought "It should not be allowed."

1

Statement by Mr. J. M. Deagle

Industry

Terra Cotta

The Terra Cotta clay, a hard red clay, is suitable for making bricks. Pressed bricks, or wire cut bricks, (puddle-bricks).

Industry
Wood Cutting

THE CONSERVATOR January 17, 1929.

TERRA COTTA

WOODCUTTING

Wood cutting is still the general order of the day.

THE CONSERVATOR BRAMPTON

30th June 1938.

TERRA COTTA

Our quarries are all booming at present. Our merchants, also report trade quite brisk at present.

FAMILY HISTORY

Name? Abel Robinson

Lot and Concession? ~~Toronto E. Con. 4. Lot 10, 1861~~ Gore of Toronto N.D. Con. 9. Lot 5 1874

Date of Birth? Date of Death? 1927

Place of Burial? Ebenezer Cem.

Parents? ~~Able~~ Abel and Mary Robinson Smith

Where did they live? Gore of Toronto N.D. Con. 10. Lot 7.

From where did they come and when?

Wife's name? Hannah Agar

Wife's father's name?

Wife's father's place of Residence?

Date of wife's Birth? 1853 Date of Wife's Death? 1932

Place of wife's Burial?

What was A. Robinson Occupation? Farmer

Religion? "

Politics? Liberal

What offices did he hold in the Community, Township, County, Province, School, and Church?

Pathmaster
Fenceviewer
auditor

To what Societies or Military Organizations did he belong?

Did he raise any pure bred stock? If so, what breed?

TORONTO EVENING TELEGRAM, 25th Jan. 1938.

Farmers Turn Out En Masse to Aid Drought-Stricken Newcomer to Terra Cotta

Terra Cotta, Jan. 25 (Special)—Farmers of this community, who turned out en masse to help a newcomer settle his cattle and chattels, cannot quite understand why there should be any call for thanks for their action.

To them their course was clear. A newcomer had arrived. He was in difficulties. Someone had to help—so they helped.

To William Saunders and his family who had come in from Western Canada, with all their belongings, to make a fresh start in the kindlier east, their neighbors' kindnesses are not dismissed so lightly. They will not soon forget how a band of strangers descended upon them, acted as carters and haulers to take their goods to their new farm, and then adopted the entire family for the night so each and every member could sleep comfortably rather than spend miserable hours in a cold house.

ROBBED OF FOOD

"Pshaw!" say the neighbors to any suggestion of thanks. And then recall that such kindness is just one of the traditions of Erin and Caledon Township folk. The tradition goes back at least a century, to 1836, in fact.

In that year, recalls R. B| Houston, there arrived at Caledon one James Cunningham, with his family. They were well equipped to pioneer their Crown deed. Their supplies were landed at Oakville, and included a year's provisions. Two wagons were hired and, heavily loaded, started the trek to Caledon. Just south of what is now Erin village the wagons sank to their hubs in the newly made road and the hired teamsters gave up their task.

The wagons were unloaded and the newcomers advised to take shelter with a nearby settler. While they were away the teamsters decamped with the year's supply of food.

It seemed a hopeless proposition for the newcomers, but they had not reckoned with the kindliness of the Erin pioneers. From near and far they came. Oxen were yoked and the newcomers' effects moved over the rough trail, at which the teamsters had jibbed, and installed in a newly built log cabin.

Then, from their own supplies of food, the settlers brought forth enough to keep the new family until their first harvest was in. Supplies were given of flour and meal, of pork, venison and bear meat; maple syrup was brought by the gallon; the more precious commodities, tea and salt, in sufficency. The small family fared well its first year in the new country.

"They are just naturally warm-hearted," says Mr. Houston, who knows the Erin and Caledon folks of to-day as he knew the folk of yesteryear.

FOR DAUGHTER'S SAKE

Mr. and Mrs. Saunders, the newcomers of a few days ago, agree. They like the east, although they refuse to admit the west is finished.

"The West will come back," they say, and perhaps they will go back.

There was more than one reason why they came east. The main reason was not to make a new start, after discouraging years in the west, but to help their small daughter.

She is blind, through scarlet fever contracted some years ago. In their old community there was no school to which she could go. In the east there is every facility for her—and the help she will get is more than sufficient recompense for the long trek her family has made to their new home.

Toronto—Terra Cotta

Conservator 8 August 1907

Terra Cotta

TERRA COTTA

The Brick Co. suffered a severe loss in the breaking away of the dam about 4 O'clock Saturday morning. The cost to repair besides loss of business for a month will be ~~at~~ at about $2,000.

Terra Cotta
copy

Oct. 3, 1907

Conservator

TERRA COTTA

The Brick Co. have started again in full blast. They have their new dam completed, which is a very substantial structure, and have now more power than ever. They purpose having the town lighted up with electricity shortly. Push and enterprise is their mottor, and we all join in wishing their continued success.

Brampton, 8 Jan. 1831.

Industry — Hydro

TERRA COTTA

Terra Cotta is now to the front. The long looked for has arrived namely the Hydro has reached here and a number of our citizens have ~~their~~ their's installed including our enterprising merchants, Mr. J. L. Craine and Mrs. Icam.

Conservator 22 June, 1906 Industry

Terra Cotta copy

TERRA COTTA

Terra Cotta has recently been brought to the attention of the business world by the organization of the Brick Company and the establishment of the works here.